

Borough and Port of Sandwich

Annual Report

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE YEAR

1949

To the Chairman and Members of the Public Health Committee, Borough of Sandwich.

I have the honour of submitting for your information and consideration the Annual Report on the Health and General Sanitary condition of the Borough for the year ending December 31st, 1949.

The Report is compiled in accordance with the Memorandum and instructions of the Ministry of Health, and reveals that the health of the community has been maintained at a satisfactory level.

Vital Statistics.

The birth rate for the year was 13.71 per 1,000 of population, which showed a decrease from that for the previous year (19.35 per 1,000) and also from that for England and Wales (16.7 per 1,000). This decrease was common throughout the country and may bear some relation to the vexed problem of housing.

The death rate for the year was 10.61 per 1,000 of population, being less than that recorded for the preceding year (13.9 per 1,000) and below that for England and Wales (11.7 per 1,000).

The commonest cause of death was heart disease, which accounted for 26.8% of the total deaths. It is interesting to note that 81.7% of these had attained the age of 65 years and upwards. Cancer accounted for 21.1%, and cerebral hæmorrhage 9.7% of the total deaths. Infant mortality showed a clean sheet, not a single death having occurred during the year. The death rate for England and Wales was 32 per 1,000 live births.

Infectious Diseases.

There was a decided increase in the number of cases of measles notified; 84, as compared with 11 in the preceding year. Most of the cases were of a mild nature and free from complications, and occurred during the months of March and April, children between the ages of two and five years being mostly affected. Whooping cough was noticeable by its absence, not a single case having been notified during the course of the year, which was a welcome contrast to that of the preceding year, when 31 cases were notified. It was gratifying to note that not a single case of diphtheria occurred in the Borough, which goes to prove, if proof were needed, the efficacy of immunisation as a preventive measure. At the end of the year the percentage of immunised children

under 15 years of age in the Borough was 73.2%. One case of acute polio-myelitis occurred in a boy aged three. The case was sent to the Kent and Canterbury Hospital, and recovered, the disease leaving one of the limbs paralysed. Judging from the history of the case it would seem that the infection was contracted outside the Borough. How this virus infection is spread is conjectural, but there would appear to be some evidence that carriers, such as are met with in diphtheria and enteric fever, play an important rôle in the transmission of the disease. Polio-myelitis is no new disease, and has probably been in evidence for many hundreds of years. It occurs in all parts of the globe, irrespective of temperature or race. The fact that in many instances of the disease the home and school contacts do not contract the disease is suggestive of an acquired immunity amongst the contacts, and may explain the sporadic cases that occur in different parts of the country. The virus has been recovered from sewage and sewage contaminated water, and may occur on unwashed fruit and vegetables, and flies have been found to harbour it and may transmit the infection from place to place. The virus is excreted from the human body via the respiratory tract or bowel. Infantile paralysis is a misnomer, as the disease attacks adults just as often as children. So far we have no means of preventing the spread of this infection beyond the usual quarantine measures, and until we possess a prophylactic such as we possess for smallpox, enteric fever, cholera, typhus, and diphtheria, we can only rely on these precautionary measures and hope for the best. Polio-myelitis is a seasonal disease, occurring mostly in the summer months, with peak periods in July and August. It is regrettable that so much sensational publicity is given to this disease, as it only produces apprehension and fear amongst the community, two important ingredients in the forging of the weak link in the chain of body resistance. After all, more children are killed on the roads during the year than by this disease.

General.

With my Report is incorporated the Report of the Sanitary Inspector, Mr. Douglas, on the sanitary circumstances in the Borough. It contains much interesting matter, and shows the efficient manner in which he carried out this branch of work during the course of the year, and once again I convey to him my gratitude for his assistance and co-operation in the course of my duties.

T. J. NICHOLL,

August, 1950.

Medical Officer of Health.

SECTION A.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

The Borough of Sandwich is a market town surrounded by an agricultural area, and adjacent to important colliery developments. It is enclosed by the Eastry Rural District as now constituted, and is situated over the thinning north-eastern edge of a large bowl-shaped block of coal measures which rest on carboniferous limestone.

The major portion of the area is low lying, but in the Southern portion the land is slightly more elevated. The whole of the Northern part is low lying marsh land, on which is situated the so-called Port of Richborough, which came into existence in the war 1914-18.

Area (including inland water), 2,137 acres.

Population (census 1931), 3,687; estimated 1949, 3,863
(civilian = 3,760).

Number of inhabited houses (end of 1949), 1,307.

Density of population (persons per acre), 1.75.

Rateable value, £30,030.

Sum represented by 1d. rate, £115 6s. 3.81d.

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR.

Births.

(1) Live Births:

	M.	F.	Total.
Legitimate	25	24	49
Illegitimate	2	2	4
	—	—	—
	27	26	53

Birth Rate (per 1,000 population), 13.71.

England and Wales (1949), 16.7.

	M.	F.	Total.
(2) Still Births	1	0	1

Deaths.

	M.	F.	Total.
Net total deaths in 1949	26	15	41

Death Rate (per 1,000 population), 10.61.

England and Wales (1949), 11.7.

Deaths from Puerperal Causes, nil.

Infant Mortality.

	M.	F.	Total.
Deaths under one year of age:			
Legitimate	0	0	0
Illegitimate	0	0	0
	—	—	—
	0	0	0

Other Deaths:

Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	9
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	0
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages) ...	0
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age) ...	0

CAUSES OF DEATH IN THE BOROUGH DURING THE YEAR 1949.

Causes of Death.	Male.	Female.
All Causes	26	15
Tuberculosis of the Respiratory System	—	—
Tuberculosis (other forms)	—	—
Whooping Cough	—	—
Pneumonia	1	—
Syphilitic Diseases	1	1
Cancer of Uterus	—	1
Cancer of Breast	1	2
Cancer of all other Sites	3	2
Intra-Cranial Vascular Lesions	4	2
Heart Disease	8	3
Other Diseases of Circulatory System ...	2	2
Bronchitis	1	—
Ulcer of Stomach and Duodenum ...	1	—
Diabetes	1	—
Other Digestive Diseases	—	—
Nephritis	1	1
Congenital Malformations	—	—
Puerperal Sepsis	—	—
Road Traffic Accidents	1	—
All other causes	1	1

Of the total deaths, Heart Disease accounted for 26.8%, Cancer 21.1%, and Cerebral Hæmorrhage 9.7%.

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF.

Medical Officer of Health: T. J. Nicholl, F.R.C.S., D.P.H.

Borough Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector: T. Douglas,
F.S.I.A., F.Inst.P.C., A.M.Inst.M.E.

SECTION B.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

Hospitals:

- (a) General: There is no general hospital in the Borough. Cases requiring treatment are largely dealt with at the Ramsgate General Hospital, the Kent and Canterbury Hospital situated at Canterbury, and the Victoria Hospital, Deal. After the 5th July, 1948, the Hospital and Specialist services came under the administration of the South-East Metropolitan Regional Hospital Board, which is responsible for all Hospitals in the County.
- (b) Infectious Diseases: Cases of infectious disease occurring in the Borough are sent to either Haine, Canterbury, or Dover Isolation Hospitals.

Ambulance Facilities:

- (1) For infectious cases: Cases are removed by ambulances attached to the different Hospitals.
- (2) For non-infectious cases and accidents the County Council now provides a comprehensive service with depôts at Ramsgate, Canterbury, Deal, and Dover.

Maternity and Nursing Homes:

There are none in the Borough.

Professional Nursing in the Home:

The County Council, as the Health Authority, provides an excellent service for the area. Two midwives reside in the Borough.

Maternity and Child Welfare:

The Centre at the Masonic Hall is administered by the County Council.

Tuberculosis and Venereal Disease:

This service now comes under the administration of the South-Eastern Hospital Board. Chest Clinics are held at Ramsgate, Deal, Canterbury, and Dover. Clinics for the treatment of venereal disease are held at Margate General Hospital, Kent and Canterbury Hospital, and the Royal Victoria Hospital, Dover.

Laboratory Facilities: .

Clinical material is submitted to the County Laboratory, as are samples of milk, water, sewage, etc.

SECTION C.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water:

The water supply for the Borough is derived from the Corporation's Water Works, situated at Woodnesborough, in the Eastry Rural District. From a deep well some 200,000 gallons of water is pumped every 24 hours, and is chemically treated prior to delivery.

(a) Chemical Analyses:

Description of sample of water taken from reservoir:

	Parts per 100.000
Total solid residue	48
Chlorine	3.7
Free Ammonia	0.0
Albumenoid Ammonia	0.0
Nitrogen as Nitrates	0.4
Oxygen absorbed $\frac{1}{4}$ -hour at 26.7°C. ...	0.012
Oxygen absorbed 4 hours at 26.7°C. ...	0.016
Toxic Metals	Absent
pH	7.34

Remarks: The water is of satisfactory organic quality.

(Signed) H. E. MONK,

Public Analyst for the County of Kent.

22nd December, 1949.

(b) Bacteriological Examination:

During the year samples of drinking water were sent to the County Laboratory each month for bacteriological examination.

The following table shows the results of these examinations:—

Date.	Description of Sample.	Number of Organisms per c.c. capable of growth on Agar.		B. Coli. (presumptive) in 100 c.c.
		37°C.	22°C.	
1- 1-49	Water from Reservoir	2	10	Absent
29- 1-49	" " Bishop's Yard	2	14	"
24- 2-49	" " Reservoir	0	5	"
22- 3-49	" " Guildhall	8	15	"
26- 4-49	" " Bishop's Yard	54	92	"
27- 5-49	" " Reservoir	42	58	"
26- 6-49	" " Guildhall	0	14	"
29- 7-49	" " Bishop's Yard	2	3	"
21- 8-49	" " Reservoir	2	4	"
28- 9-49	" " Guildhall	0	8	"
26-10-49	" " Reservoir	0	2	"
26-11-49	" " Reservoir	0	0	"
29-12-49	" " Reservoir	0	4	"

Good Water.

(Signed) E. R. JONES, County Laboratories, Maidstone.

Rainfall in the Borough during the Year:

Month.	Inches.
January	1.00
February	0.87
March	0.50
April	1.49
May	1.55
June	0.38
July	0.72
August	0.74
September	3.32
October	6.53
November	3.77
December	1.22
Total Rainfall in 1949	22.09

Drainage and Sewerage:

Main drainage is provided for practically the whole of the Borough. The sewage is discharged into the River Stour at two outlets without previous treatment.

Number of premises connected to main drain, 1,304.

Number of premises connected to cesspools, 18.

Public Cleansing:

The collection and disposal of domestic refuse is carried out officially by the Corporation. House refuse collections are made weekly, a Scammell motor vehicle, fitted with canvas covers to render the process of loading as dustless as possible, being used for this purpose. A trailer is attached to the vehicle for the conveyance of waste paper, rags, and bones. The refuse is disposed of at the Controlled Tip situated in Richborough Road, where it is compacted and the banks of the tip covered with grass sods previously removed prior to tipping. This method of disposal has proved quite satisfactory.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area:

The following are the particulars supplied to the Medical Officer of Health by the Sanitary Inspector with regard to the sanitary inspection of the area:—

Number of Inspections made during the year, 789.

Number of Notices served, statutory nil, informal 38.

NUMBER AND NATURE OF INSPECTIONS DURING THE YEAR.

Nature.	Inspections.
Dwelling Houses	87
Bakehouses (5)	36
Food Preparing Places (4)	51
Factories and Workshops (33)	82
Dairies (3)	49
Miscellaneous	484

DEFECTS REMEDIED DURING THE YEAR.

Defective Sanitary Accommodation	44
Defective Drainage	78
Refuse Receptacles	94
Structural Repairs (Roofs, Walls, Floors, etc.)	51
Defective Sanitary Fittings	32
Windows and Ventilation	15
Water Supply	40
Miscellaneous	78

Shops Act, 1934:

During the year the Sanitary Inspector made 16 visits in connection with the general administration of the Shops Acts. No formal action was found necessary.

Factories Act, 1937:

1.—Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health, including inspections made by the Sanitary Inspector.

Premises.	No. on Register.	Inspec- tions.	Written Notices.
(1) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 are to be en- forced by Local Authorities ...	17	42	—
(2) Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority ...	16	40	—
(3) Other Premises in which Sec- tion 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	—	—	—
Total	33	82	—

2.—Defects Found.

Particulars.	No. of cases in which defects were found.			
	Found.	Remedied.	Referred to H.M. In- spector.	Prose- cutions.
Want of cleanliness (S.1) ...	5	5	—	—
Overcrowding (S.2)	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floor (S.6)	3	3	—	—
Sanitary conveniences (S.7)	6	6	—	—
Other offences	—	—	—	—
Total	14	14	—	—

Rodent Control:

A part-time Rodent Officer is employed to carry out the work of rats and mice infestation.

During the year 43 complaints of minor infestations were received and satisfactorily dealt with.

Estimated number of rodents killed after pre-baiting and poisoning, 902.

Examination of the sewers showed signs of infestation. In March there were three takes, in September two takes.

Verminous Premises:

Four complaints were received during the year and satisfactorily dealt with.

Re-inspections are made after disinfestation has been completed to ensure that proper precautions are taken to prevent re-infestation.

Salvage:

During the year the collection of waste paper and cardboard was continued, and after sorting was baled and sent to the Paper Mills.

The quantity of paper and cardboard collected was 22 tons 2 qrs.

SECTION D.

HOUSING.

During the year a considerable number of war-damaged houses were repaired and made habitable.

Number of inspections made during the year, 53.

Number of dwelling houses found not to be in all respects fit for habitation, 61.

Number of houses rendered fit for habitation in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority, 45.

Local Authority:

The scheme for the development of the Sandwood Housing Estate for 200 houses, shops, and bungalows, was adopted in January, 1945, when the lay-out submitted was approved by the Ministry of Health.

During 1949 further progress was made on this estate by the completion of a linking concrete road between Laburnum Avenue and St. Bartholomew's Road, giving additional frontage for 30 houses.

Contracts were let for 59 houses of the 3-bedroom types in blocks of pairs, and at the end of the year 57 houses were completed and occupied on the estate.

Private Enterprise:

During the year seven new houses were erected, and two houses re-built as a result of enemy action.

Plans were submitted and approved for several new houses, but owing to the restriction of a ratio of one private house to nine houses for the Local Authority, building licences were not available.

Despite the fact that 96 new houses have been completed and occupied as a result of private enterprise and the Corporation since 1946, this district, in common with many others, is experiencing a great housing shortage, which has produced a long waiting list of applicants for houses.

SECTION E.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

During the year the Sanitary Inspector made 136 inspections of the bakehouses, dairies, and other food preparing places in the Borough. No defects were found.

Meat:

At the commencement of the war all slaughtering in the Borough ceased, and the work is now carried out under the Ministry of Food Centralised Slaughtering Scheme.

In October, 1948, the slaughter-house in Loop Street was licensed for the slaughtering of pigs only in connection with the domestic pig-keeping scheme.

The number of pigs slaughtered at the end of the year was 36—all the carcasses, after examination, were passed as being sound.

Condemned Food:

During the past year the following foodstuffs were condemned as being unfit for human consumption:—

Meat, 27lb.; Canned Foods, 205lb.; 40 sacks of cabbages.

Ice Cream:

The Food and Drugs Act, 1938, which came into operation on the 1st October, 1939, makes it compulsory for all premises used for the sale or manufacture for sale of ice cream to be registered with the Local Authority.

Number of premises registered, 12.

Milk:

During the year the Sanitary Inspector made 16 visits to the various dairies and cow-sheds in the Borough.

Number of registered premises, 1.

Number of registered retailers, 4.

SECTION F.

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

Supply of Serum:

The South-East Kent Hospital Management Committee have arranged for stocks of Diphtheria Anti-Toxin to be held at the Victoria Hospital, Deal, which is supplied free of charge to Medical Practitioners for the use of the inhabitants of the district in accordance with the Diphtheria Anti-Toxin Order, 1910.

Diphtheria Immunisation:

A scheme for the immunisation of children against diphtheria was adopted and came into force in the latter part of 1940. Up to the end of 1949 the results were as follows:—

NUMBER OF CHILDREN IMMUNISED.		
Under 5 years.	From 5 to 15 years.	Total.
244	453	697
68.5%	76.13%	73.2%

Disinfection:

This is carried out by the Sanitary Inspector. The Council does not possess a steam disinfecter. Infected articles of clothing and bedding are sent to the Isolation Hospital at Haine for treatment. Number of premises disinfected, 8.

Verminous Persons:

There are no facilities for the cleansing of verminous persons in the Borough, but there are facilities for the disinfestation of clothing at the Haine Isolation Hospital.

Infectious Diseases:

Scarlet Fever: Eight cases were notified during the year.

Erysipelas: Two cases were notified.

Diphtheria: No cases occurred during the year.

Measles: Eighty-four cases were notified.

Pneumonia: Two cases were notified.

Polio-myelitis: One case was notified.

Puerperal Pyrexia: One case was notified.

TUBERCULOSIS.

New cases and mortality during the year 1949:—

Age Periods	New Cases				Deaths			
	Pulmo- nary		Non-Pul- monary		Pulmo- nary		Non-Pul- monary	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	—
5	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
20	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
25	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
35	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
45	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65&over	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	1	6	—	1	—	—	—	—

Cases of Tuberculosis Remaining on Register, December 31st, 1949.			
Male		Female	
Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary
13	6	12	1

ANALYSIS OF TOTAL NOTIFIED CASES UNDER AGE GROUPS

Disease	Age Period														Total	Admitted to Hospital	Deaths
	0	1	2	3	4	5	10	15	25	35	45	55	65				
Scarlet Fever			1	1	1	3	2							8	3	—	
Pneumonia		1										1		2	—	—	
Measles	3	5	12	7	14	36	4	4		1				84	—	—	
Acute Polio-Myelitis				1										1	1	—	
Puerperal Pyrexia									1					1	—	—	
Erysipelas								1			1			2	1	—	

PORT OF SANDWICH.

Since the transfer of the administration of the Port from the Admiralty at the end of 1947 reconstruction work has been completed so as to restore the pre-war facilities for dealing with shipping making use of the Port.

Particulars of shipping entering the Port during the year 1949:—

			Tonnage.
Foreign—Motor Vessels	6	...	1031
Coastwise—Sail and Motor Vessels ...	22	...	2699
			—
Total Tonnage ...			3730
			—

Inspection of the six foreign vessels was carried out by the Sanitary Inspector. These vessels possessed clean bills of health and Deratisation Exemption Certificates.

Nature of cargoes:
 Coastwise: Oil cake, petroleum products, flour.
 Foreign: Timber.

It is interesting to note that in the year 1937 the total tonnage entering the Port was 19.687.

